

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for receiving facsimiles in a multi-function printer device, said method comprising:
 - answering, by said multi-function printer device, an incoming phone call;
 - playing, by said multi-function printer device, an outgoing communication;
 - monitoring, by said multi-function printer device, said incoming phone call to detect a facsimile tone;
 - generating, by said multi-function printer device, a ring on a telephone out-port of said device in response to no facsimile tone being detected during said monitoring; and
 - initializing said multi-function printer device to receive an incoming facsimile transmission in response to a facsimile tone being detected during said monitoring.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said monitoring is carried out during said playing.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said monitoring continues while generating said ring.
4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - ceasing said ring by said multi-function printer device in response to said facsimile tone.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said answering is carried out on a first incoming ring.
6. The method of claim 1 further comprising detecting said incoming phone call and answering said incoming phone call before a first incoming ring.
7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - monitoring, by said multi-function printer device, for sound after said incoming call is answered; and
 - initializing said multi-function printer device to receive an incoming facsimile transmission in response to no sound being detected during the answered call.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
answering, by said multi-function printer device, said incoming phone call after a predetermined number of the generated rings;
playing, by said multi-function printer device, an outgoing message; and
recording, by said multi-function printer device, an incoming message.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising storing said facsimile in memory of said multi-function printer device.

10. The method of claim 1 further comprising storing said facsimile in memory of a general purpose processor based device connected to said multi-function printer device.

11. A multi-function printer device comprising:
means for printing media;
means for optically scanning media;
means for answering incoming phone calls;
means for sending and receiving facsimiles;
means for playing an outgoing communication;
means for monitoring said incoming phone calls and detecting an incoming facsimile tone;
means for generating a ring on a telephone out-line in response to said monitoring means not detecting an incoming facsimile tone; and
means for initializing the facsimile means to receive an incoming facsimile transmission in response to said monitoring means detecting an incoming facsimile tone.

12. The device of claim 11 wherein said monitoring means continues to monitor said incoming call for a facsimile tone while said generating means generates said ring.

13. The device of claim 11 further comprising:
means for monitoring said incoming call for sound after said incoming call is answered and initializing the facsimile means to receive an incoming facsimile transmission in response to no sound being detected during the answered call.

14. The device of claim 11 further comprising means for interfacing with a network.
15. The device of claim 11 further comprising means for receiving at least one memory device and means for downloading received faxes to said memory device.
16. The device of claim 11 wherein said scanning means comprises a flatbed optical scanner.
17. The device of claim 11 wherein said scanning means comprises a picture frame scanner.
18. A system for providing a multi-function printer device a capability for routing calls, said system comprising:
 - a multi-function printer device comprising:
 - a printer;
 - an optical scanner;
 - a call answering functionality; and
 - a facsimile functionality;
 - wherein said multi-function printer device answers and monitors incoming phone calls to internally intercept incoming calls, initialize said facsimile functionality to receive incoming facsimile transmissions, and generate a ring on a connected telephone for non-fax calls; and
 - a general purpose processor-based device selectively interfaced with said multi-function printer device and selectively powered.
19. The system of claim 18 wherein said facsimile functionality stores said incoming facsimiles to memory of said general purpose processor-based device.
20. The system of claim 18 wherein said general purpose processor-based device hosts a user interface adapted to receive user settings for said multi-function printer device.
21. The system of claim 18 wherein said multi-function printer device is a stand-alone device adapted to employ said facsimile and call answering functionalities, monitor said incoming phone calls and generate said ring independent of said interface with said general purpose processor-based device.

22. The system of claim 18 wherein said multi-function printer device is a stand-alone device adapted to employ said facsimile and call answering functionalities, monitor said incoming phone calls and generate said ring independent of a power status of said general purpose processor-based device.

23. The system of claim 18 wherein said multi-function printer device further comprises a wireless interface, interfacing said general purpose processor-based device with said multi-function printer device.

24. The system of claim 18 wherein said multi-function printer device further comprises voicemail functionality.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein a user interface hosted by said general purpose processor-based device enables recording of an outgoing message for use by said voicemail functionality.

26. The system of claim 24 wherein a microphone associated with said general purpose processor-based device is used to record an outgoing message for use by said voicemail functionality and a speaker associated with said general purpose processor-based device is used by said voicemail functionality for playing incoming messages.